

Hispanic Protestantism in the United States: Trends by Decade and Generation *

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Abstract

This research studies Hispanics in the U.S. to identify temporal and sociodemographic factors that predict differences between Catholic religious affiliation and other affiliations, especially Evangelical and Pentecostal forms of Protestant affiliation that are apparently increasing. Examining the General Social Survey conducted from 1972 to 1996 and aggregating a Hispanic sample from multiple surveys, comparisons of Hispanic Catholics and non-Catholics are made across three decades and by three types of generational status. A series of logistic models predicting different types of non-Catholic affiliation show non-Catholics have an increased presence in the Hispanic population from the 1970s to the 1990s and from first through third generations, but there is little evidence that fundamentalist Protestantism is gaining large numbers of converts from Catholicism. Only mainline Protestants and people indicating no religious preference show increased proportions across the three decades, while both mainline Protestants and fundamentalist Protestants have increased proportions among third (or more) generation residents. Several possible explanations of why the GSS surveys do not support the widely-held view that it is fundamentalist Protestant churches that are the major recipients of the general "exodus" from Catholic affiliation are considered.

The social significance of Protestantism as a religious affiliation for Hispanic Americans in the U.S. has recently become the subject of renewed sociological inquiry (Greeley 1994; Hunt 1998).

Although most populations now termed Hispanic by the U.S. government historically have been Roman Catholic, there has been significant movement in the twentieth century away from Catholicism, both in Latin America and among North American Hispanics (Deck 1994; Martin 1990; Stoll 1990; Sylvest 1990). Especially in the last half of the twentieth century, Protestantism appears to be a growing force in Latin America and other Hispanic communities throughout the hemisphere.

In the U.S., inquiry into Hispanic Protestantism is linked to the increasing numerical presence of Hispanics, who represent the most rapidly growing minority group (Bean & Tienda 1987; del Pinal & Singer 1997). **The renewed interest in Hispanics converting to Protestantism is organized around issues surrounding their assimilation into the mainstream of American society.** Whether new patterns of non-Catholic religious involvement among Hispanics will become elements of the classic dynamics of a "Protestant Ethic," facilitating individuation and the rationalization of practitioners' lives in ways conducive to assimilation and secular success (Greeley 1994; Roberts 1968) is a challenging question that lies beyond the scope of this investigation.

This research addresses a more limited question: "has there been increase in the proportions of Hispanics who shifted from Catholicism to other religious affiliations?" I examine this question by comparing Hispanic Catholics with Hispanic non-Catholics across three decades and three generations, controlling for the operation of sociodemographic factors. As a secondary theme, evidence from the consideration of sociodemographic controls is evaluated for clues to the social distinctiveness of the varieties of Hispanic Protestantism.

Evidence for Protestant Increase among Hispanics

Most inquiries into the increased Protestant presence among Hispanics in the United States are based on numbers reported by various denominations (Barnett 1982), journalistic impressions (Blair 1997; Rodriguez 1992) or small scale empirical studies of particular community dynamics (Hughes 1992; Marin & Gamba 1993; Penalosa & McDonough 1966). In addition, most inquiries reflect the issues posed by established religious institutions, namely, how the Catholic Church and/or various Protestant denominations are organized in ways that are responsive to Hispanics (Deck 1994; Stevens-Arroyo 1994). There has been general inquiry into religious developments in various types of Hispanic communities located in different parts of the country, e.g. Puerto Ricans in New York (Diaz-Stevens 1993), and Cubans in Florida (Dolan & Deck 1994), with considerable interest in the Mexican-American population, the single largest Hispanic/Latino subpopulation, located largely in South-western and Western states (Dolan & Hinojosa 1994; Elizondo 1994). A common theme in this literature notes the apparent dramatic increase in Evangelical and Pentecostal forms of Protestant affiliation.

Two recent studies based on nation-wide surveys explore the growth and correlates of Hispanic Protestantism in the United States (Greeley 1994; Hunt 1998). Using General Social Survey (hereafter GSS) data from the years 1972-88, Greeley documents a growing number of Hispanics "defecting" from the Catholic church, and identifies some sociodemographic differences between **Hispanic Protestants** and Hispanic Catholics. Greeley estimates that the Spanish Origin population in the United States in the 1980s was 70% Catholic, 22% Protestant, and 8% "other," including nonaffiliates and other non-Catholic, non-Protestant groupings. Also, Greeley points to an 8% rate of defection among Hispanics in recent decades as more leave the Catholic church, mostly for forms of fundamentalist Protestant affiliation; fully three-fourths of all Spanish Origin Protestants in the GSS surveys identify themselves as Baptists or Fundamentalists. These findings raise the question of whether this rate of defection has continued in the 1990s and whether fundamentalist Protestant churches are the affiliations gaining in membership as a result of the exodus of Hispanics from Catholicism.

Greeley's analysis of GSS data for the 1970s and 1980s showed that Protestantism had increased in Hispanic membership over those two decades and also identified some distinctive secular characteristics of **Hispanic Protestants**. According to the 1972-88 GSS data, **Hispanic Protestants**, compared to Hispanic Catholics, have higher secular status; they have more education, more income, and are more likely to have higher occupational status (e.g., managers and/or white collar workers). Further, Protestants come from higher status backgrounds, as indexed by their father's educational level, and are more active church participants, attending religious services much more frequently. Greeley attributes these secular and religious patterns in the 1970s and 1980s to the failure of the Catholic church to "provide community and respectability for the upwardly mobile Hispanic American" (1994: 562).

Hunt (1998) analyzed a different national survey, the 1984 National Alcohol Study (hereafter NAS), and found some patterns inconsistent with Greeley's findings. Some of these inconsistencies were due, in part, to differences in the nationwide samples examined, and the fact that Hunt utilized more refined comparisons, separating Protestants into mainline and fundamentalist affiliations. Unlike the GSS surveys, the NAS survey was based on a multi-stage sample with a sampling frame dedicated to Hispanics, and, also unlike the GSS surveys, included non-English-speaking respondents. Hunt found lower estimates of non-Catholic proportions than did Greeley -- only 16 % were Protestant, 77 % were Catholic, and 6 % were "other" (reported no religious preference or preference for some non-Catholic, non-Protestant affiliation). When language of the respondents was controlled, the distribution of religious affiliations was close to that of the GSS surveys only among English-speaking Hispanics;

those respondents who were interviewed in Spanish were more likely to be Catholic and thus less likely to report any type of Protestant affiliation.

Like Greeley, Hunt (1998) found that most **Hispanic Protestants** were aligned with fundamentalist churches, and had higher levels of church attendance and religious involvement than Hispanic Catholics. However, Hunt found little evidence that conversion to Protestant affiliations has been consequential for higher status and/or assimilation into the American mainstream. Only mainline Protestants showed signs of a status advantage, with fundamentalist Protestants having somewhat lower status than their Catholic counterparts. Hunt speculated that the social base of fundamentalism among Hispanics is not markedly different from the larger Catholic population, indeed, that fundamentalist movement is a revival of forms of popular religion not dissimilar to folk Catholicism, an "alternative" to the official Catholic Church that appears among the more marginal and lower status segments of the Hispanic population.

This study examines a larger set of GSS surveys covering a longer time frame than that examined by Greeley, and maps the demographic and social bases of various "alternatives" to Catholicism among Hispanics in the U.S. Greeley's analyses are extended in two ways: (1) by examining the GSS surveys conducted in the 1990s to see if Protestant growth has continued in the last decade and, (2) by developing multivariate logistic regression models to predict different types of non-Catholic affiliation while controlling for sociodemographic factors such as region, residence, race, gender, and being Mexican-American. Greeley's analyses were limited to comparisons between the 1970s and 1980s, and were based on percentage comparisons of general Catholic/Protestant characteristics with no refinement of the Protestant category nor any statistical controls for sociodemographic factors permitting the examination of where Protestant increase is occurring nationwide. Although the GSS surveys have some limitations described below, they provide one of the best nationwide sources of data that can be brought to bear on these issues.

Data and Measures

The empirical base for this study is respondents of "Spanish Origin" in the General Social Surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (hereafter, NORC) between 1972 and 1996. Conducted in most years since 1972, the GSS surveys are designed to yield a representative sample of English-speaking adults 18 years and older living in non-institutional settings within the U.S. The typical sample size in a given year is approximately 1,500. All annual samples have been merged by NORC into a single cumulative data file which is extensively described by Davis and Smith (1996). Although specific design elements and precise wording of some interview items have changed from survey to survey, the cumulative file has been extensively refined for across-survey consistency and is a useful database for both trend analysis and interviews to study minority populations such as Hispanics.

To create an aggregated sample of Hispanics ($N = 1,449$), I selected respondents from the total GSS file ($N = 35,294$) who said their ancestors came from countries or parts of the world that indicate Hispanic origins. Following Greeley (1994), the existing GSS codes to the variable ETHNIC were used, selecting four categories; those indicating (1) Mexico, (2) Spain, (3) Puerto Rico and/or (4) "other" Spanish origins, a composite containing persons from Central and South America, and/or Spanish West Indies, including Cuba. The GSS variable ETHNIC includes only respondents who identified with a single kind of ancestry. Departing from Greeley's procedure, I also included respondents who could not decide on a single ethnic origin but reported "dual ancestries" linked to two or more of the above four categories. Thus, a person tracing their ancestry to both Puerto Rico and Spain, for example, is not identified as having an ethnicity in the GSS ETHNIC coding scheme, but is

considered an Hispanic in this study and is classified in the "other Spanish" category.

There are two disadvantages of the GSS samples for studying Hispanics. First, this collection of respondents is not a probability sample -- the selection of people to be interviewed is not based on a sampling frame dedicated to the Hispanic population in the U.S. Second, the GSS surveys are limited to English-speaking respondents and thus do not represent the Hispanic population that does not speak English. Despite these limitations, the richness of the GSS data on both secular and religious factors, provides an opportunity to explore issues involving the possible shifts in religious affiliation among Hispanics.

Working with a sample aggregated from interviews conducted over a 24 year time frame poses some additional problems. In two of the GSS surveys (1982 and 1987) there was an intentional oversampling of African Americans for specific research issues in those surveys. This investigation follows the recommendations of NORC researchers and uses the GSS variable (OVERSAMP) in all analyses to correct for possible overrepresentation of blacks who are also Hispanic due to oversampling. And, because there may be trends across survey years other than those of direct inquiry, a year of interview variable is included in all analyses.

Religious Affiliation

The following discussion of this study's affiliation measures refers to variable names and coding schemes created by GSS researchers (identified by capitalized words) and is intentionally detailed to facilitate replication and/or extension of this study's results.¹

Respondents were classified into religious affiliation categories reflecting their expressed preference (or nonpreference). Respondents were asked to describe themselves as Protestant, Catholic, Jew, other or none. If Protestant was the reported preference, a request for additional information concerning specific

denominational affiliation was made. A four category affiliation classification was constructed from these responses that identifies: (1) Catholics, (2) Mainline Protestants, (3) Fundamentalist Protestants, and (4) the Nonaffiliated, those with no religious preferences.² This classification yields affiliation estimates that are consistent with past studies. Catholics are by far the largest affiliation ($N = 1,025$, 72%), Fundamentalist Protestants are next in size ($N = 206$, 14%), with about equal proportions of mainline Protestants ($N = 98$, 7%), and the nonaffiliated ($N = 99$, 7%).

The specifics of identifying the four affiliations are as follows: Catholic is a variable identifying respondents coded as "Catholic" on GSS variable RELIG. The two Protestant categories were created by utilizing specific denominational affiliations reported by the respondent (on DENOM and/or OTHER) and the GSS variable "FUND" that classifies denominations into liberal, moderate, and fundamentalist subgroups (see Smith, 1986). I collapsed the liberal and moderate categories on the FUND variable to create the mainline Protestant category. This category contains members of affiliations such as Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Congregational, as well as Lutheran, Methodist, Disciples of Christ, and Unitarian. The fundamentalist category I use includes those classified as fundamentalist on the GSS FUND variable and includes such affiliations as Baptist, Pentecostal, Holiness, Church of God, Seventh-Day Adventist, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other smaller groupings.³ Finally, None is a variable identifying those who report no religious preference on the GSS variable RELIG. Each "affiliation" category is measured by a dummy variable in which a 1 is assigned to members of a category and a 0 is assigned to all other respondents.

RELIGIOUS ORIGINS

Respondents were also asked about their religious origins, specifically, what religion they were raised in (asked in each year except 1972). Responses were coded in a manner identical to current affiliations and dummy variables were created for each of the four categories used in this research.

CONVERTS TO PROTESTANTISM

Dummy variables for converts to mainline or fundamental Protestantism were computed by comparing current religion and religious origins, using the four affiliation categories. Note that this procedure does not identify people who shift from one denomination to another within a particular Protestant category. Converts are identified as those who make a major change, shifting from one of the four categories to another.

Independent Variables

Two categorical variables are examined for evidence of "defection" from Catholicism: decade and generation. Decade has three categories, based on the year an interview was conducted: 1 = interview year from 1972 to 1979; 2 = interview year from 1980 to 1989; and 3 = interview year from 1990 to 1996. Generation has three categories: 1 = first generation -- those born outside the U.S. mainland (36%); 2 = second generation -- those born in the U.S. with one or more parents born outside the U.S. (22%); and 3 = third (or more) generation -- those born in the U.S. with both parents born in the U.S. (42%). Because the information for generation was not collected in all surveys, we examine the effects of decade and generation in separate analyses, using a smaller, more temporally restricted subsample when generation is the focus of analysis. I expect that the proportions of non-Catholics will increase from the 1970s to the 1990s, and will also increase with longer intergenerational residence in the U.S.

Control Variables

SOCIAL ORIGINS

Two factors linked to the respondents' social origins are examined: (1) rural residence while growing up and (2) the social status of the family of orientation as indexed by parent's education level. Rural origins is a dummy variable coded 1 if GSS variable RES16 = 1 or 2, 0 otherwise. The level of parental education was created by indexing the highest level of educational attainment reported for either the mother (MAEDUC) or father (PAEDUC) of the respondent. This variable identifies those with high parental education, coded 1 if at least one parent had 12 or more years of formal schooling, 0 otherwise.

CURRENT STATUS CHARACTERISTICS

Current sociodemographic variables describing the respondent at time of interview include: Ethnicity, identifying Mexican Americans = 1, all others = 0; Region, identifying residence in a southwestern or western state = 1, all other states = 0; Mobile = 1 if respondent had moved from another state to their present location, 0 otherwise; urban = 1 if current residence is in a city, 0 otherwise; gender (or female) is coded 1 if respondent is female, 0 if male; race (or nonwhite), is coded 1 if black (3%) or other (23%) and 0 if white (74%); and age is measured in years based upon the date of birth reported.

Research Questions and Logistic Models

1. *Is there evidence that Hispanics are "defecting" from Catholicism?* This question is addressed by examining whether there are increased proportions of non-Catholics in the 1990s compared to earlier decades and whether there are increased proportions of non-Catholics among third generation residents compared to other generations.
2. *Are Hispanics turning to Protestantism, especially fundamentalist Protestantism?* This question is addressed by examining the different non-Catholic affiliations for increases in their proportions across recent decades and by generational status. Also, the question of whether particular Protestant affiliations are gaining more members via conversion is considered.
3. *Are there any trends by decade and/or generation that are independent of other sociodemographic factors and/or are there trends conditional upon social locations?* Addressing these questions requires moving beyond simple comparisons of religious affiliations and employing multivariate statistical techniques. I examine a series of multivariate logistic regression models that predict a type of non-Catholic affiliation. The central questions are (1) whether decade and/or generation variables predict the increased likelihood (technically the increased log odds) of being non-Catholic and (2) whether these variables have significant effects net of other sociodemographic variables. Further, I also assess models including interaction terms to see whether the effects of the two key independent variables are conditional upon different social locations, that is, whether there is any specific interaction between either decade or generational status and other sociodemographic or status factors. Should the basic models not reveal any general trends indicating dramatic increases in non-Catholic affiliation, there remains the possibility of a growing non-Catholic presence in particular regions, types of communities, and/or other social circumstances. Here the issue is whether the relationship between decade and/or generation and the log odds of being non-Catholic change across levels of control variables.

The main effects models are tested, initially predicting three types of non-Catholic affiliation: (1) mainline Protestant, (2) fundamentalist Protestant, and (3) the non-affiliated, with Catholics serving as the reference category. If there is any trend towards increased proportions of non-Catholics across decade or generation, the models should show an increased likelihood of persons being non-Catholic in the later decades and generations. Models with interaction terms explore whether any decade or generation effects exist that are specific to particular groups or social locations using Protestant affiliation as the event predicted.⁴

For the two major categorical independent variables, the logistic regression coefficients are computed as deviations from the average effect of all subcategories of an independent variable.⁵ These coefficients indicate the direction and amount of the relationship between membership in a category and non-Catholic affiliation. Also reported are the log odds for particular categories which express the factor by which the odds that membership in a category either increase or decrease the likelihood of being non-Catholic, controlling for other variables in the model. Thus, for the two independent variables, these odds reflect the effect of membership in a particular subcategory, such as being a first, second, or third generation resident. For dummy variables, these odds reflect the impact of the named predictor having a value of 1 compared to those who are not members of a category and have a value of 0. For interaction terms, the log odds reflect the joint impact of a subcategory of a categorical variable and the presence of a particular dummied variable. Note that a negative regression coefficient is always linked to a log odds of less than 1 and a positive coefficient always linked with a log odds greater than 1. The level of significance reported is based upon the Wald statistic that describes the relationship of the regression coefficient to its standard error.

Findings

Table 1 provides descriptive information on the independent and control variables used in the regression analyses. Means and standard deviations are reported for each variable used as a predictor.

Are Hispanics defecting from Catholicism as a religious affiliation? Table 2 suggests a mixed answer; there are clear increases for the three non-Catholic affiliations in general, but no increase for converts to fundamentalist Protestantism. Examining Catholic affiliation, there is a ten percent decline in the proportion of Catholics in each of the two basic comparisons; (1) across the three decades, the proportion Catholic declines from 78 % to 67 %, and (2) by generational status, the proportion Catholic declines from 76 % among first generation Hispanics to 66 % among the third or more generation residents.

Are Hispanics turning to Protestantism, and, in particular, to fundamentalist affiliations? Again, the answer is mixed. When type of non-Catholic is specified, there are some clearly differentiated patterns. Across decades, each of the three non-Catholic categories show similar increases of about 3 % or 4 %, with the differences for mainline Protestants significant for the 1970s vs. 1990s comparison. Interestingly, the differences for fundamentalists are significant only for the 1970s to 1980s comparison where the proportion increased by nearly 50%. This reinforces what Greeley found for those two decades: a dramatic increase in fundamentalist Protestantism. However, the absence of marked increase for the 1990s means Greeley's expectation of a high rate of defection continuing into the 1990s is not apparent. Across generations, only the two Protestant categories show an increase from the first generation to the third generation (about 5 % for each), with no clear increase of the non-affiliated.

TABLE 1: Means and Standard Deviations for All Variables, Hispanic Sample, GSS Surveys, 1972-1996

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Categorical variables		
Decade		
1970s	.23	.42
1980s	.43	.49
1990s	.35	.48
Generation		
First generation	.36	.48
Second generation	.22	.41
Third + generation	.42	.49
Dummy variables		
Rural origins	.16	.37
Parent's educ.: 12/plus years	.31	.46
Urban residence	.83	.37
Region: SW/West	.62	.48
Geographically mobile	.38	.49
Mexican American	.52	.50
Race: nonwhite	.26	.44

Gender: female	.58	.49
Continuous variable		
Age	36.96	13.5

Examining converts to Protestantism shows there are no increases across the generation variable in the proportions of non-Catholic converts,⁷ a slight increase across decades for converts to mainline Protestant affiliations, but no increase for converts to fundamentalist affiliations. These comparisons mean that in the U.S. in recent decades and among longstanding residents, non-Catholic proportions are increasing but there may be no dramatic increase in the proportions of Hispanics who have converted to Protestantism in the course of their life cycle. Thus, Protestant growth in members may be more linked to inter-generational dynamics rather than the intra-generational shifting of religious allegiances. Analysis now turns to an examination of the multivariate logistic models that further explore these patterns.

TABLE 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Religious Affiliation Variables for Total Sample and by Decade and by Generational Status, Hispanic Sample, GSS Surveys, 1972-1996

		Decade 1972-96			Generation 1977-96		
	Total	1970s	1980s	1990s	First	Second	Third
Current affiliation							
Catholic	.72 (.45)	.78 (.41)	.72 (.45)	.67 ^{bc} (.47)	.76 (.43)	.72 (.45)	.66 ^c (.48)
Main Protestant	.07 (.25)	.05 (.21)	.07 (.25)	.09 ^c (.29)	.04 (.21)	.07 (.26)	.10 ^c (.29)
Fund Protestant	.14 (.32)	.11 (.32)	.16 (.37)	.15 ^a (.35)	.13 (.34)	.13 (.33)	.18 ^c (.38)
None	.07 (.25)	.06 (.24)	.05 (.22)	.10 ^b (.29)	.06 (.24)	.08 (.28)	.07 (.26)
Converts to							
Any Protestant	.11 (.32)	.08 (.27)	.14 (.34)	.13 ^a (.32)	.11 (.32)	.12 (.33)	.12 (.33)
Main Protestant	.04 (.19)	.01 (.12)	.05 (.21)	.05 ^a (.22)	.02 (.15)	.02 (.15)	.03 (.18)
Fund Protestant	.07 (.26)	.07 (.25)	.09 (.28)	.07 (.25)	.08 (.27)	.10 (.32)	.09 (.29)
N	1,428	323	613	492	429	262	511

^aDifference between first and second category is significant at .05 level.

^bDifference between second and third category is significant at .05 level.

^cDifference between first and third category is significantly at .05 level.

Table 3 summarizes a number of logistic models that focus on analyses by decade, and presents the

logistic regression coefficients and the log odds associated with the predictor variables for the three types of non-Catholics. The main effects for decade show evidence of "defection" from Catholicism that is net of other variables in the model, but only for the mainline Protestants and the nonaffiliated, where the odds of being non-Catholic for these two outcomes are significantly greater in the 1990s. The fact that there is no evidence that fundamentalists have increased proportions across the three decades or even in the decade of the 1980s compared to the 1970s, net of other sociodemographic factors, raises the question of what particular sociodemographic factors are important in shaping the difference Greeley observed for these two decades.

TABLE 3: Logistic Coefficients and Log-Odds for Main Effects (Model 1) and Interaction Effects (Model 2) Predicting Three Types of Non- Catholic Religious Affiliation, Hispanic Sample, GSS Surveys, 1972- 1996-

	Mainline Protestant				Fundamentalist Protestant			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)
Decade								
1970s	-.44	.64 [□]	-.45	.64	-.11	.90	.17	-1.18
1980s	.05	1.05	.27	1.31	.10	1.11	.05	1.05
1990s	.39	1.48 [□]	.18	1.19	.00	1.00	.22	.81
Social origins								
Rural	-.07	.93	-.08	.92	.18	1.19	.20	1.22
High parent educ.	.33	1.38	.34	1.41	.32	1.38 [□]	.32	1.39 [□]
Residence								
Urban	.08	1.08	.10	1.11	-.30	.74	.32	.73
Region: SW/West	.38	1.46	.38	1.46	-.29	.75	.26	.77
Mobile	-.68	.51 ^{□□}	-.67	.51 ^{□□}	.33	1.39 [□]	.33	1.39 [□]
Current status								
Mexican American	-.85	.43 ^{□□}	-.86	.42 ^{□□}	.12	1.13	-.01	.99
Race: nonwhite	-.09	.92	-.11	.90	.53	1.71 ^{□□}	.53	1.70 ^{□□}
Age	.01	1.01	.01	1.01	.01	1.01 [□]	.01	1.01 [□]
Gender: female	-.14	.87	-.15	.86	.27	1.31 [□]	.26	1.30
Interactions								
1970s [□] Mx-Am			.04	1.05			-.59	.55 [□]
1980s [□] Mx-Am			-.57	.56 [□]			.13	1.14
1990s [□] Mx-Am			.53	1.70 [□]			.47	1.60 [□]
Intercept	-2.52		-2.57		-2.23		-2.18	
-2 Log-likelihood	624.05		618.87		1,067.13		1,061.64	
N	1,082		1,082		1,187		1,187	

TABLE 3: Logistic Coefficients and Log-Odds for Main Effects (Model 1) and Interaction Effects (Model 2) Predicting Three Types of Non-Catholic Religious Affiliation, Hispanic Sample, GSS Surveys, 1972- 1996 (Continued)

	No Affiliation			
	Model 1		Model 2	
	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)
Decade				
1970s	-.12	.88	-.17	.84
1980s	-.20	.81	-.18	.84
1990s	.33	1.39 [□]	.35	1.42
Social origins				
Rural	.15	1.16	.14	1.15
High parent educ	.23	1.26	.23	1.26
Residence				
Urban	.26	1.30	.27	1.31
Region: SW/West	.40	1.50	.40	1.49
Mobile	.12	1.13	.12	1.13
Current status				
Mexican American	-.33	.72	-.31	.74
Race: nonwhite	.08	1.08	.08	1.08
Age	-.02	.98 [□]	-.02	.98 [□]
Gender: female	-.43	.65 [□]	-.43	.65 [□]
Interactions				
1970s [□] Mx-Am			.10	1.10
1980s [□] Mx-Am			-.05	.95
1990s [□] Mx-Am			-.05	.95
Intercept	-1.94		-1.96	
-2 Log-likelihood	631.33		631.26	
N	1,081		1,081	

Note: Likelihood that category membership predicts a type of non-Catholic Affiliation:

□ p < .10 □□ p < .05 □□□ p < .01 □□□□ p < .001

Before considering possible specific interactions between decade and the controls, I briefly consider the question of the main effect of the controls and their significance for identifying the social bases of Hispanic Protestantism. The secondary issue here is whether there is there any sign that **Hispanic Protestants** are socially distinctive in ways suggestive of higher or lower status? On social background, rural origins does not predict any type of non-Catholic affiliation. There is some indication, however, that higher rather than lower parental education predicts fundamentalist affiliation, lending some support to Greeley's "higher status" interpretation of Hispanic Protestantism and raising a question about Hunt's speculation that fundamentalist Protestantism is growing mainly among the ranks of those most disenfranchised segments of the Hispanic population. On residence, only

geographical mobility discriminates between Catholics and non-Catholics with a sharp difference between patterns linked to mainline and fundamentalist Protestants. Mainline Protestants have been significantly less geographically mobile than Catholics, whereas the fundamentalists have been significantly more mobile. This pattern for fundamentalists runs parallel to dynamics in the African American experience where mobility of various types is predictive of movement from historically established churches to more sect-like affiliation (Frazier 1964; Williams 1972). On current status, again there is evidence for the distinctiveness of mainliners and fundamentalists compared to Catholics. Mainliners are under represented among Mexican-Americans; Fundamentalists differ from Catholics with the Non-white, Older and Women somewhat more likely to be fundamentalist Protestants. These latter findings are consistent with the "lower status" interpretation advanced by Hunt. Finally, the data suggest an increased likelihood of Hispanics being non-affiliated in the 1990s, a pattern especially marked for the younger and for males.

Returning to the issue of effects by decade, what does adding interaction terms to model 1 show? Model 2 interactions between decade and being Mexican American (the only control variable that dramatically improved the main effects model) point to the increased proportions of Mexican American Protestants, both mainline and fundamentalists in the 1990s. This interaction suggests Protestantism is emerging as an alternative affiliation in Mexican American communities, more so than in the rest of the Hispanic population, in recent years. There is no increase in fundamentalist Protestantism among Hispanics in general, but there are signs of fairly general Protestant growth among Mexican Americans in the 1990s.

Table 4 explores these possibilities further by estimating the odds of being any of four types of Protestants: mainline stables, mainline converts, fundamentalist stables, and fundamentalist converts. The main effects for decade found in Model 1 for these four types of Protestant affiliation suggest that the increased odds of being Protestant across the three decades are more pronounced for both types of mainline Protestantism, with no significant effects for either type of fundamentalist affiliation. Again, there is no sign of a distinctive fundamentalist presence of any type among Hispanics in general.

The interactions added in model 2 suggest a more complex pattern. For Mexican Americans, there is greater presence of mainline converts in the 1990s, as well as signs of an increasing fundamentalist presence, but only among those who have Protestant origins, e.g., intergenerational ties to Protestantism. In other words, the growing presence of fundamentalists among Mexican Americans may be due to the emergence of an inter-generational fundamentalist base more so than intra-generational conversion. Once again, there is no evidence that conversion to fundamentalist Protestantism is a distinctive force in Hispanic communities over the three decades covered by the GSS surveys.

Table 5 summarizes the results of a series of models that incorporate information on generation from the smaller subsample and presents, for reasons of space, only the log odds associated with the four types of Protestant affiliation. The main effects of control variables (plus year as a linear control) are similar to those described above, thus I focus on the new categorical variable -- generation -- and two interesting interactions associated with its effects. In addition to examining the conditional effects linked to being Mexican American, a dramatic effect for the interaction of generation and gender is also included in the models.

The main effects for generation (model 1) run parallel to the effects of decade: greater proportions of non-Catholics are present in later generations only among the "stable" mainline and "stable" fundamentalist Protestants; there are not significantly higher proportions for either type of convert to Protestantism. Thus, being a first generation Hispanic is associated with quite low odds of being a

nonCatholic of Protestant origins and being a third generation resident increased the odds of such non-Catholic affiliation sharply.

As was the case with decade, the models examining generation that contain interaction terms suggest a more complex story. First, the interaction of "generation and Mexican-American" suggests distinctive patterns for the fundamentalist "stables" who are dramatically under represented in the first generation category and over represented in the second generation category. This means that the general tendency for Hispanics born outside the U.S. to be Catholic is especially pronounced for Mexican Americans compared with other Hispanics, but that among second generation Hispanics, Mexican Americans have a greater likelihood of being linked to an intergenerational pattern of fundamentalist Protestantism.

The other interesting conditional effect of generation is the marked interaction between generation and gender that appears in the case of converts to fundamentalist affiliations. The data strongly suggest that it is first generation women who are more likely to be converts to fundamentalism. For the first time in these analyses, a combination of predictors that distinguishes converts to fundamentalist Protestantism from Catholic affiliation is found. These sharp interactions of generation and gender suggest that the fact that earlier models uncovered no clear evidence of increased conversion to fundamentalism may be due, in part, to radically different gender patterns by generation.

TABLE 4: Logistic Coefficients and Log-Odds for Main Effects (Model 1) and Interaction Effects (Model 2) Predicting Stable Protestant Affiliates and Converts to Protestant Religious Affiliation, Hispanic Sample, GSS Surveys, 1973-1996.

	Mainline Stable				Mainline Convert			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)
Decade								
1970s	-.33	.72	-.37	.69	-.77	.46 [□]	-.51	.60
1980s	-.16	.86	.10	1.11	.33	1.39	.43	1.54
1990s	.48	1.61 [□]	.27	1.32	.44	1.56 [□]	.07	1.08
Social origins								
Rural	-.20	.82	-.20	.82	-.07	.93	-.07	.93
High parent educ.	.77	2.16 [□]	.78	2.19 [□]	.07	1.07	.10	1.11
Residence								
Urban	.10	1.11	.12	1.12	.32	1.39	.35	1.42
Region: SW/West	-.29	.75	-.29	.75	.99	2.67 ^{□□}	1.00	.71 ^{□□}
Mobile	-1.27	.28 ^{□□}	-1.27	.28 ^{□□}	-.38	.69	-.36	.70
Current status								
Mexican American	-.72	.49 [□]	-.83	.43 [□]	-1.05	.35 ^{□□}	-1.30	.27 ^{□□}
Race: nonwhite	-.55	.58	-.57	.56	.17	1.19	.16	1.18
Age	.03	1.03 [□]	.03	1.03 [□]	.00	1.00	.00	1.00
Gender: female	.07	1.07	.02	1.03	-.26	.77	-.28	.76
Interactions								

1970s [□] Mx-Am		.20	1.22		-.68	.51
1980s [□] Mx-Am		-.82	.44		-.20	.82
1990s [□] Mx-Am		.62	1.87		.88	2.42 [□]
Intercept	-3.88	-3.89		-3.43	-3.41	
-2 Log-likelihood	283.40	280.50		413.51	409.35	
N	991	991		1,011	1,011	

Surveys, 1973-1996 (Continued)

	Fundamentalist Stable				Fundamentalist Convert			
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 1		Model 2	
	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)	b	Exp (b)
Decade								
1970s	-.19	.83	.16	1.18	-.02	.98	.10	1.11
1980s	.11	1.12	.20	1.21	.10	1.11	-.04	.96
1990s	.08	1.08	-.36	.70	-.08	.92	-.06	.94
Social origins								
Rural	-.18	.83	-.16	.85	.39	1.48	.41	1.50
High parent educ.	.45	1.57 [□]	.47	1.60 [□]	.15	1.16	.15	1.16
Residence								
Urban	-.43	.65	-.46	.63	-.16	.85	-.17	.84
Region: SW/West	-.47	.63 [□]	-.43	.65	-.07	.93	-.05	.95
Mobile	.07	1.07	.07	1.08	.56	1.74 [□]	.55	1.73 [□]
Current status								
Mexican American	.26	1.30	.05	1.05	.03	1.03	-.08	.93
Race: nonwhite	.70	2.01 ^{□□}	.70	2.01 ^{□□}	.33	1.38	.33	1.39
Age	-.01	.99	-.00	.99	.02	1.02 ^{□□}	.02	1.02 ^{□□}
Gender: female	.04	1.04	.01	1.01	.48	1.62 [□]	.48	1.62 [□]
Interactions								
1970s [□] Mx-Am			-.78	.46 [□]			-.25	.78
1980s [□] Mx-Am			-.10	.90			.28	1.32
1990s [□] Mx-Am			.88	2.42 ^{□□}			-.04	.97
Intercept	-2.08		-2.04		-3.81		-3.76	
-2 Log-likelihood	625.13		817.77		651.82		650.82	
N	1,051		1,051		1,056		1,056	

Note: Likelihood category membership predicts a Protestant Affiliation:

□ p < .10 □□ p < .05 □□□ p < .01 □□□□ p < .001

TABLE 5: Log-Odds for Main Effects (Model 1) and Effects (Model 2) Predicting Stable Protestant Affiliates and Converts to Protestant Religious affiliation, Hispanic "Generation" Subsample, GSS Surveys, 1977-1996

	MAIN Stable		MAIN Convert		FUND Stable		FUND Convert	
	Model		Model		Model		Model	
	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2
Generation								
First	.42 [□]	.17 [□]	.69	.50 [□]	.62 [□]	1.20	.77	.17 ^{□□}
Second	.94	1.38	1.25	2.26 [□]	.79	.23 [□]	1.13	2.53 [□]
Third	2.53 ^{□□}	4.27 ^{□□}	1.15	.89	2.06 ^{□□□}	3.61 ^{□□}	1.15	2.32 [□]
Social origins								
Rural	.81	.82	.86	.89	.87	.92	1.61 [□]	1.80 [□]
High parent educ.	1.76	1.72	.90	.89	1.53 [□]	1.53 [□]	1.18	1.10
Residence								
Urban	2.00	1.99	1.49	1.42	.71	.65	.83	.79
Region: SW/West	.37 [□]	.34 [□]	2.48 [□]	2.94 ^{□□}	.48 [□]	.44 ^{□□}	.88	.94
Mobile	.53	.55	.85	.81	1.57 [□]	1.67 [□]	1.91 [□]	2.03 [□]
Current status								
Mexican								
American	.55	.89	.35 ^{□□}	.28 ^{□□}	1.43	1.57	.99	1.03
Race: nonwhite	.49	.47	1.28	1.23	2.03 ^{□□}	2.08 ^{□□}	1.47	1.40
Age	1.02	1.02	1.01	1.00	.99	.99	1.02 [□]	1.02 [□]
Gender: female	1.06	1.30	.79	.78	.92	1.05	1.49 [□]	1.74 [□]
Year	1.05	1.05	1.02	1.02	.99	.99	.99	.99
Interactions								
1st Gen [□] Mx-Am		3.24		1.04		.20 ^{□□}		.88
2nd Gen [□] Mx-Am		.70		.57		5.27 ^{□□}		1.14
3rd Gen [□] Mx-Am		.44		1.70		.96		1.00
1st Gen [□] Female		2.36		1.83		.89		8.24 ^{□□□}
2nd Gen [□] Female		.61		.58		1.70		.29 ^{□□}
3rd Gen [□] Female		.69		.95		.65		.42 [□]

Note: Likelihood category membership predicts a Protestant Affiliation:

□ p < .10 □□ p < .05 □□□ p < .01 □□□□ p < .001

Conclusions

These analyses suggest there is "defection" of Hispanics from Catholicism, but provide little evidence that fundamentalist Protestantism is continuing to grow at a high rate into the 1990s, and little indication that conversion to fundamentalist Protestantism is winning over Hispanics to any appreciable degree. Both mainline Protestant affiliations and the non-affiliated, while not as large in membership as the fundamentalist segment of Protestantism, have increased in the decade of the 1990s. These developments, coupled with the lack of growth for fundamentalist Protestantism in this decade, may indicate the gradual turning away of Hispanics not only from Catholicism, but eventually from Protestantism as well. If so, both mainline Protestantism of the moderate and liberal varieties and non-affiliation may suggest more distance from traditional Hispanic communities of memory and meaning. In that regard, if there is a Protestantism status advantage for Hispanics, it may be limited to those connected to mainline Protestant social networks.

What can we conclude about the widespread assumption that it is fundamentalist Protestantism that is the major destination of those shifting from Catholic affiliation? While fundamentalist affiliation is the largest type of non-Catholic affiliation, and has the most longstanding presence in Hispanic communities, there is no dramatic evidence for the growing significance of fundamentalism. The major evidence for recent increases in fundamentalist Protestantism is largely limited to the Mexican American community in the 1990s. And, the only hint of factors that predict the increase in converts to fundamentalism is the marked tendency for first generation women to be fundamentalist converts.

Because this is a pattern linked to first generation Hispanics, whether conversion occurred in the U.S. or in a person's country of origins cannot be ascertained in the GSS data. There are two possibilities. One, conversion might have occurred prior to arrival in the U.S. If so, the disproportionate representation of women converts among first generation Hispanics would seem to reflect what many observers have noticed: namely, in Latin America, it is usually women who are the first in communities and families to convert to Protestantism (Brusco 1995; Mariz 1996). Alternatively, if conversion occurred after migration to the U.S., the conversion differentials by gender might be linked to distinctive gender experiences central to the migration experience (Hagan 1998) where women have a greater need for the social and moral support of church-based social networks. Obviously, these speculations are not firmly grounded conclusions and are offered as possibilities for future research.⁸

It is important to recognize some possible limitations of the findings of this study. The absence of more evidence for the conversion of Hispanics to fundamentalist varieties of Protestantism may be due to limitations of the sample used and/or the way in which religious affiliation is defined in this study.

It is possible that in recent years there is significant Protestant growth via conversion to fundamentalist churches in the non-English-speaking segments of Hispanic communities, an issue that cannot be resolved with GSS data. (The supplemental NAS analyses summarized in endnote 7 are limited to a survey in the early 1980s, and do not rule out this possibility). The fact that more refined analyses of the Mexican American subgroup are suggestive of some conversion effects linked to differentiated first and second generation experiences lends some credence to that speculation; only studies of "Spanish-only" communities can establish the presence of different dynamics. On the other hand, the fact that (1) most first generation Hispanics are more likely to be Catholic and (2) these persons are less likely to be linguistically assimilated into English-speaking patterns, suggests the Catholic Church may continue to find strength and renewal in Spanish-only communities. This is clearly an important question that future research should address.

A second possible interpretation of this study's general failure to uncover much evidence for growing fundamentalist Protestantism (and related conversion effects) may be due to the fact that classifying Hispanic religious affiliations based on the GSS coding scheme is inadequate to the task. It is possible that Hispanic Protestantism has a pervasive fundamentalist dimension that is not captured by the GSS classification scheme, a set of codes that reflects religious variations of the larger society defined by Anglo, rather than Hispanic, experience. While there are some marked differences in the GSS data between mainline and fundamentalist Protestantism among Hispanics that would call such speculation into question (recall that the mainliners and fundamentalists differ from Catholics in different ways on geographical mobility, race, age, and gender), the possibility that the GSS codes do not capture other important aspects of Hispanic religious experience should not be ignored in future research.

More studies examining the growing religious diversity of Hispanics in the United States, as well as possible consequential aspects of conversion to new affiliations, are needed. Such work will help identify the role of the varieties of Protestantism in Hispanic life -- providing answers to questions such as whether fundamentalist Protestantism is a pathway linked to patterns of assimilation and upward mobility, or alternatively, whether it is a continuation of popular religion and reinforces minority status. Popular religion first emerged among Hispanics as a form of cultural resistance to official Catholicism, consolidating the collective experience of a powerless minority (Benavides 1994). Although fundamentalist Protestantism is a clear departure from the "official" forms of Catholic religious community among Hispanics, it may not be dissimilar to folk Catholicism, an enduring tradition that has long existed outside official Catholicism. Consequently, it may reinforce traditional forms of community rather than create the new social networks that the classic version of the "*Protestant Ethic*" presumes critical to either secular mobility and/or acceptance into the American mainstream. If fundamentalist Protestantism constitutes a new variation of Hispanic "popular religion," such new forms of Protestant faith and community will likely constitute adaptations to lower status, rather than paths to secular achievement and assimilation.

Notes

1. Since Greeley's work, GSS has reworked the codes for ETHNIC for consistency across all the years of interviews (Davis & Smith 1996: 1172-73) so that the current codes may be slightly different from the codes used by Greeley.
2. I elected to focus analyses on those reporting any type of Christian affiliation and/or no affiliation, thus removing from subsequent analyses a small number of Jews, those identifying with some "other religions" and those providing no information on religious affiliation ($N = 25$). This reduction of sample size to a total of 1,428 respondents does not alter the percentage estimates for most of the four affiliations. Only the Catholic percent is changed, from 71% to 72%.
3. The GSS coding of religious affiliation changed in 1984 by the addition of more detailed codes for Protestant affiliations differentiating, for example, American Baptists from Southern Baptists. Prior to 1984 only a general Baptist code was available and all Baptists in those years were classified as fundamentalists on the GSS FUND variable. Because this study uses the FUND variable, I explored the possibility that coding changes affected study results. Two steps were taken. First, I ignored the detailed codes after 1984 assigning values to all respondents based on the early coding system. Only two Baptists in the Hispanic sample were reclassified from mainline to fundamentalist, a step that had no impact on any of the models. Additionally, I examined the detailed codes for the total GSS sample to identify possible fluctuations in the frequency of people classified as fundamentalist, moderate, or liberal on the FUND variable.

There were no marked changes in proportions; the movement of some Baptists to the moderate category after 1984 is counterbalanced by the movement of some Lutherans and Presbyterians to the fundamentalist category. It is unlikely that the coding changes affected study results.

APPENDIX A: Distribution of Specific Protestant Denominations in the GSS Hispanic Subsample

	N	Percent	Percent Convert
Protestant Denomination			
Baptist	67	22	39
Pentecostal	40	13	34
Methodist	31	10	24
Jehovah's Witness	26	9	79
Mormon	15	5	47
Presbyterian	14	5	50
Assembly of God	13	4	62
7th Day Adventist	12	4	36
Lutheran	12	4	30
Other Protestant	73	24	68
Total	303	100	48

4. To address potential problems of multicollinearity and to avoid numerous empty cells generated by extensive cross-classifications, I first tested all potential two-way interaction terms separately for improvement over the main effects model and then retained those first-order interactions that most dramatically improved model fit.
5. This strategy is used because both independent categorical variables are above a nominal level of measurement. That is, the subcategories of both decade and generation have a clearly interpretable increase from first to third decade or from first to third generation. This coding scheme permits comparison of the effects of a particular subcategory compared to the average effect of all categories, e.g., whether the effect of a particular subcategory is more or less than the average effect of all subcategories.
6. All controls examined in the interaction models have been dummy coded. When a particular variable had more than two categories, cutting points were established by examining a series of logistic models employing the multiple categories and then reducing the number of intervals to the strategic cutting points. For example, parental education was first treated as a continuous variable before deciding on the dummy values of 12 or more years of education, compared to those having less than 12 years of education.
7. To check on whether these findings might be due to the fact that the GSS excludes Spanish-speaking Hispanics, I examined the 1984 NAS survey that included both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking respondents who were interviewed in the language they chose. A generation measure very similar to that used in the current study (it was not possible to examine trends by decade) shows that Catholics are underrepresented among English-speaking Hispanics and

specifically those with third or more generational status but there are no marked differences for any of the three types of non-Catholics in general nor in any particular generational category by language group. These supplemental analyses suggest the fact that the GSS is limited to speakers of English may mean that these surveys somewhat overestimate the Protestant presence among Hispanics. They also point to the absence of conversion dynamics specific to the Spanish-speaking segments of the Hispanic population.

8. One reviewer suggested the possibility that my use of the FUND variable to identify two types of Protestant affiliation might result in missing some important dynamics. If **Hispanic Protestants** are concentrated in a few specific denominations, and these larger denominations are those growing by high rates of conversion from Catholicism, then using the composite FUND variable which lumps various denominations into general categories might underestimate the growth of fundamentalist Protestantism. To check on this possibility I identified the "top ten" specific Protestant denominations found in the GSS Hispanic subsample, and also the proportions within these denominations with Catholic religious origins (see Appendix A). In general, there is no evidence that the larger denominations are those receiving high proportions of converts from Catholicism. Additionally, I ran logistic regressions using denominational categories to identify different varieties of Protestants. Treating specific denominations as the "event" to be predicted does not lead to any different conclusions regarding the growth of Protestantism and/ or conversion dynamics than are drawn by using the GSS FUND classification. These models are available upon request.

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*The data used in this study are available from Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. A copy of the SPSS syntax file containing all data transformations used in this research is available to those interested in replication or extension of this study. This file may be obtained by contacting the author at his e-mail address. Please address all other correspondence to the author at his departmental address. Thanks are due to Matthew Hunt, Karen Fleischer and John Pease for their constructive comments on an earlier draft of this article. Direct correspondence to Larry L. Hunt, Department of Sociology, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland 20742, E-mail: LHUNT@SOCY.UMD.EDU.

Publication Information: Article Title: Hispanic Protestantism in the United States: Trends by Decade and Generation. Contributors: Larry L. Hunt - author. Journal Title: Social Forces. Volume: 77. Issue: 4. Publication Year: 1999. Pages: 1601-1624.